

AMENDMENTS TO THE CLAIMS

CLAIMS WHAT IS CLAIMED IS:

1. (Currently Amended) A gaming machine for the playing of a game of chance wherein an outcome of said game of chance is determined by a predefined one of a plurality of payline patterns of indicia displayed on a display means by a game control module; said payline patterns formed of a selection of elements of a matrix of columns and rows and wherein the number of said elements forming any one payline pattern is greater than the number of columns of said matrix; adjacent elements of said matrix staggered in a horizontal direction, and wherein each element of said adjacent elements is bounded by six sides.

2. (Original) The gaming machine of claim 1 wherein said columns of said matrix are in the form of simulated reels divided peripherally into a plurality of elements; each said element displaying an indicia.

3. (Currently Amended) The gaming machine of claim ~~[[1 or]]~~ 2 wherein said rows of said matrix are comprised of a number of displayed aligned elements of each of said reels.

4. (Currently Amended) The gaming machine of claim ~~[[2 or]]~~ 3 wherein the number of said reels is five and the number of said rows is three.

5. (Currently Amended) The gaming machine of ~~any one of claims 2 to 4~~ claim 2 wherein said simulated reels are caused to display a spinning motion during a game; said reels coming to rest in a randomly selected position under control of said game control module so as to display three elements of each reel.

6. (Currently Amended) The gaming machine of ~~any one of claims 2 to 5~~ claim 1 wherein the number of said elements defining said predefined one of a plurality of payline patterns is one greater than said number of columns.

7. (Currently Amended) The gaming machine of ~~any one of claims 1 to 6~~ claim 6 wherein the number of said elements defining said predefined one of said plurality of payline patterns lies in the range of one greater than said number of columns and the total of said elements in said matrix.

8. (Currently Amended) The gaming machine of ~~any one of claims 1 to 7~~ claim 1 wherein said plurality of payline patterns is indicated to a player of said gaming machine by representations of said payline patterns on a front panel of said gaming machine.

9. (Currently Amended) The gaming machine of ~~any one of claims 1 to 8~~ claim 1 wherein said game control module randomly selects a payline pattern from said plurality of payline patterns for each game played on said gaming machine.

10. (Currently Amended) The gaming machine of ~~any one of claims 1 to 8~~ claim 1 wherein said game control module randomly selects a payline pattern from said plurality of payline patterns; said payline pattern maintained as a winning pattern until matched by a game played on said gaming machine.

11. (Currently Amended) The gaming machine of claim 9 ~~[[or 10]]~~ wherein said selected payline pattern is indicated to a player of said game when said reels have come to rest by highlighting said elements corresponding to said selected payline pattern.

12. (Currently Amended) The gaming machine of claim 9 ~~[[or 10]]~~ wherein said selected payline pattern is indicated to a player of said game when said reels have come to rest by a projected outline of said elements corresponding to said selected payline pattern.

13. (Original) The gaming machine of claim 12 wherein said projected outline is displayed on said display while said reels are spinning.

14. (Currently Amended) The gaming machine of ~~any one of claims 2 to 13~~ claim 2 wherein a player of a game may pre-select a payline pattern and wherein, if said payline pattern matches a pattern of indicia of said reels when come to rest, said player is awarded a prize.

15. (Currently Amended) The gaming machine of ~~any one of claims 1 to 14~~ claim 1 wherein said selected payline pattern of elements is arranged so that in one column and one column only, at least two elements of said selected payline pattern have a common edge.

16. (Currently Amended) The gaming machine of ~~any one of claims 1 to 14~~ claim 1 wherein said selected payline pattern of elements is arranged so that in one row and one row only, at least two elements of said selected payline pattern have a common edge.

17. (Currently Amended) The gaming machine of ~~any one of claims 1 to 14~~ claim 1 wherein said selected payline pattern of elements is arranged so that none of said elements have a common edge.

18. (Currently Amended) The gaming machine of ~~any one of claims 1 to 14~~ claim 1 wherein said selected payline pattern of elements is arranged so that all of said elements have at least one edge common with another one of said elements.

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19. (Currently Amended) A gaming machine according to ~~anyone of claims 1 to 18~~ claim 1 wherein said gaming machine is provided in addition to said display means with a secondary display means; said secondary display means adapted to the playing of a bonus game.

20. (Original) The gaming machine of claim 19 wherein at least one bonus game is conferred on a player of said gaming machine in the event of a winning outcome display of a main game on said display means.

21. (Cancelled)

22. (Currently Amended) The gaming machine of claim ~~[[21]]~~ 1 wherein adjacent elements in a column adjacent a first column are staggered in a vertical direction.

23. The gaming machine of claim 1 ~~21 or claim 22~~ wherein said elements are aligned vertically in columns in said matrix.

24. (Cancelled)

25. (Currently Amended) The gaming machine of claim ~~[[24]]~~ 1 wherein each said element includes a symbol located within its border.

26. (Currently Amended) The gaming machine of ~~any one of claims 21 to 25~~ claim 21 wherein selected sides of adjacent elements are maintained in a parallel, spaced apart relationship.

27. (Currently Amended) A gaming machine according to ~~any one of claims 1 to 26~~ claim 1 wherein said gaming machine is one of a plurality of linked gaming machines interactively linked to a jackpot system.

28. (Currently Amended) A plurality of linked gaming machines, each machine of the type claimed in ~~any one of claims 1 to 26~~ claim 1 and wherein a jackpot prize is awarded by said jackpot system when play of a game on one of said gaming machines results in a pattern of indicia matching a pre-selected payline pattern.

Claims 29-43 cancelled